

SS United States

Article

Talk

For other uses, see *SS United States (disambiguation)*.

SS *United States* is a retired American **ocean liner** that was built during 1950 and 1951 for **United States Lines**. She is the largest ocean liner to be **entirely constructed in the United States** and the fastest ocean liner to cross the **Atlantic Ocean** in either direction, retaining the **Blue Riband** for the highest average speed since her maiden voyage in 1952, a title she still holds.

 <div>SS <i>United States</i> at sea in the 1950s</div>	
History	
<div> United States</div>	
Name	<i>United States</i>
Owner	<div> <div><div>1952–1970:</div></div> <div> United States Lines</div> <div><div>1970–1980:</div></div> <div> US Maritime Administration</div> <div><div>1980–1992:</div></div> <div> Richard Hadley</div> <div><div>1992–1997:</div></div> <div> Marmara Marine</div> <div><div>1997–2003:</div></div> <div> Edward Cantor</div> <div><div>2003–2011:</div></div> <div> Norwegian Cruise Line</div> <div><div>2011–2024:</div></div> <div> SS United States Conservancy</div> <div><div>2024–present:</div></div> <div> Okaloosa County, Florida</div> </div>
Operator	United States Lines
Port of registry	New York City
Route	<div> <div><div>1952:</div></div> <div> Transatlantic: New York – Le Havre – Southampton (also Bremerhaven)</div> <div><div>1961:</div></div> <div> Cruises</div> </div>
Ordered	1949 ^[1]
Builder	 Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company ^[1]
Cost	\$71.8 million (\$676 million in 2023 ^[2])
Yard number	Hull 488 ^[3]
Laid down	February 8, 1950
Launched	June 23, 1951 ^[4]
Sponsored by	Lucile Connally
Christened	June 23, 1951 ^[4]
Maiden voyage	July 3, 1952
In service	1952
Out of service	November 14, 1969 ^[5]
Identification	<div> <div><div>IMO number:</div> 5373476 </div> <div><div>Callsign</div> KJEH</div> <div><div> </div> </div></div>
Nickname(s)	<i>Big U</i>
Status	Underway to Mobile , to be turned into an artificial reef
General characteristics	
Type	Ocean liner
Tonnage	53,329 GRT , 29,475 NRT
Displacement	<div> <div>45,400 tons (designed)</div> <div>47,264 tons (maximum)</div> </div>
Length	<div> <div>990 ft (302 m) (overall)</div> <div>940 ft (287 m) (waterline)</div> </div>
Beam	101.5 ft (30.9 m) maximum
Height	175 ft (53 m) (keel to funnel) ^[6]
Draft	<div> <div>31 ft 3 in (9.53 m) (design)</div> <div>32 ft 4 in (9.86 m) (maximum)</div> </div>
Decks	12 ^[7] :16
Installed power	<div> <div>240,000 shp (180,000 kW) (rated)</div> <div>247,785 shp (184,773 kW) (trials)</div> </div>
Propulsion	<div> <div>4 × Westinghouse double-reduction geared steam turbines</div> <div>8 × Babcock & Wilcox Type-M boilers at 925 psi and 975 °F (524 °C)</div> <div>4 × shafts, 2-four blade props, 2-five blade</div> </div>
Speed	<div> <div>30 kn (56 km/h; 35 mph) (service)</div> <div>38.32 kn (70.97 km/h; 44.10 mph) (trials)</div> <div>43 kn (80 km/h; 49 mph) (claimed)</div> </div>
Capacity	1,972 passengers
Crew	1,044 ^[7] :16
SS <i>United States</i> (Steamship)	
U.S. National Register of Historic Places	
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Location	Pier 80, Philadelphia , Pennsylvania
Architect	 William Francis Gibbs
NRHP reference No.	99000609 ^[8]
Added to NRHP	June 3, 1999

The ship was designed by American **naval architect** **William Francis Gibbs** and could have been converted into a **troopship** if required by the **United States Navy** in time of war. The ship served as an icon for the nation, transporting celebrities and immigrants throughout her career between 1952 and 1969. Her design included innovations in steam propulsion, hull form, fire safety, and damage control. Despite her record speed, passenger counts declined in the mid-1960s due to the rise in **jet-propelled trans-Atlantic flights**.

Following the financial collapse of United States Lines, *United States* was withdrawn from service in a surprise announcement in 1969. All planned cruises were canceled, and the ship changed owners repeatedly for the next several decades. Every owner attempted to make the ship profitable, but she was aging and poorly maintained. In 1984, her interior furnishings were sold at auction, and the rest of her interiors were stripped to the bulkheads in 1994. In 1996, she was towed to **Philadelphia**, where she remained until February 2025.

Since 2009, the SS *United States* Conservancy has been raising funds in an attempt to save the ship from being scrapped. The group purchased her in 2011 and has created several unrealized plans to restore the ship. Due to a rent dispute, in 2024, the ship was evicted from her pier. Because no other locations for the ship could be found, **Okaloosa County, Florida**, bought her and plans to sink her by 2026 near **Destin** to become the world's largest **artificial reef**.

Development

Design

Construction

History

Artifacts

Speed records

In film

See also

References

Bibliography

Further reading

External links